

Men, Books, People & Things by Edgar Allan Poe

Poor Myrtle Reed—who has not enjoyed these dainty books in lavender, hers now still, though she has lain under the sod for years!

She was unhappy, but she wrote books which are much read. We all like some of them—A Spinner in the Sun, Lavender and Old Lace, The Master Violin, Master of the Vineyard, At the Sign of the Jack 'O Lantern, and others.

There is an occasional irreverent reference to love and death and things we hold sacred.

Once in a while the author indulges in a vulgarity, but, as a rule, there are wit and laughter and true human characterization. Myrtle Reed was married to a man who did not appreciate her. She was unhappy, and finally took her own life. A sympathetic understanding is not for us.

Of marriage in general one of her characters, Mrs. Dodd, says: "Now when you're used to it, you won't take it so hard. You may think men folks is all different, but there's a dreadful sameness to 'em after they've been through a marriage ceremony."

Yet our author was intelligent enough not to generalize too broadly, or become cynical regarding all men. One may excuse her, too, for her dream of an ideal love outside of marriage.

Marriage on a physical basis alone cannot last. Nor will a purely intellectual partnership suffice. There must be physical adequacy, mental competency, and temperamental adaptability. Human companionship must be in it.

Perhaps, as in one of Myrtle Reed's characters, marriage might supply the physical factors, while the rest would be found in a friendship restricted only as to the most intimate possibilities of human intercourse.

Speaking of her craft, how full of truth and pathos is the following: "It is often reproachfully said that one 'makes copy' of himself and his friends—that nothing is too intimately sacred to be seized upon and dissected in print."

"Not long ago it was said that a certain man was 'botanizing on his mother's grave,' a pardonable confusion, perhaps, of facts and realities. The better truth is that the writer lives his books and not much else. From title to colophon, he escapes no pang, misses no joy. The life of the book is his from beginning to end."

"At the close of it, he has lived what his dream people have lived, and borne the sorrows of half a dozen entire lifetimes, mercilessly concentrated into the few short months of writing."

Of early San Francisco days always circled by a glamor, I have

found no better book, either in history or fiction, than Stewart Edward White's "The Gray Dawn."

Indeed, Mr. White's books are the best books ever written about California. In interest, style, characterization and that subtle thing—"atmosphere."

They are true to facts and life without sacrificing anything to individuality and style.

They do not pant and froth with literary affections, or spoil the music by a rattle of machinery.

You are there where the author takes you, and forget everything except the characters who are making the stories.

The Riverman, Gold, these are stories.

It is Mr. White himself who says somewhere that he will not write a description of brutal exhibitions which he would not stay to see, and this saves his readers from many tiresome pages.

Few persons really like to get even a whiff of the odor of sewage. While Mr. White's stories are often about working men, he portrays their better side, not brutality and coarseness which in real life we are pretty well able to escape.

About a year ago my friend, author of "The Individual" (John Lane), asked me to read her friend W. J. Locke's book, "Jeffrey." I did not do so then, but the other day in Dr. Irwin's library at Olau, I read the story. It had been printed long enough for my state of mind.

Locke makes his characters say very clever things, and his publishers have gathered into one volume many of his bon-mots which they call "William J. Locke's Year Book."

"Jeffrey" is certainly readable, but in one or two instances at least the author has indulged in what one of our critics has called the "superior" manner.

Mr. Locke has made an Albanian-American character out of whole cloth, endowed her with loudness, bad table manners, slang, some swearing, then blamed her on Chicago.

"But you speak perfect English," said I.

"I was raised in Chicago. My parents were employed in the stockyards of Armour. My father was the man who slit the throats of the pigs—he was a dandy."

"I noticed a little shiver of repulsion ripple through Barbara and Doria."

The latter were the speaker's women folks, and the author doesn't happen to say whether they were smoking cigarettes or not at that special moment.

But they go on being amazed and shocked by the talkative "American," who declares very often that she doesn't care a "darn."

The author explains: "Chicago is

the melting pot of the nations of the world. Let me tell you a true tale—an English novelist of my acquaintance visiting Chicago received a great representative of a great daily newspaper who desired to interview him."

The interviewer was a typical American reporter, blue-eyed, high cheekboned (probably Scotch or Irish), "keen, nervous, finely strung, intensely alive, desirous to get to the heart of my friend's mystery and charmingly responsive to his frank welcome."

They talked. My friend to give the young man his story, discoursed on Chicago's amazingly solved problem of the conglomeration of all the races under heaven.

To point his remarks, and mark his contrasts, he used the words "we English" and "you Americans."

After a time the young man smiled and said: "But I'm not an American—at least I'm an American citizen, but I'm not a born American."

"But," cried my friend, "you're the essence of America."

"No," said the young man, "I'm an Englishman."

Now this may be very funny, but I don't know whether it is or not in a book supposed to be original.

Chicago as a melting pot, the American interviewer, our heterogeneous population, are subject matter for our staidest jokes.

An English novelist who can't get something new isn't doing very well. While we must acknowledge that in America we are very much mixed indeed, few genuine Americans will recognize Mr. Locke's Albanian-American. Born in Albania, brought up among the stock-yards, beautiful, rather brilliant, independent and assertive, swearing freely, with evidence of having moved in "good" society, yet having bad table manners, she is about as much American as sauer-kraut is in danger of becoming the American national dish.

Nowadays we do not often find impossible American characters in English novels. Shortly after Mrs. Trollope and Charles Dickens wrote about us, nearly every English novel had an American man or woman absolutely artificial; a garish, vulgar effigy used as a literary sop for readers as ignorant of us as the author himself.

But a better understanding has come about and Mr. Locke's incident is only a lapse.

CONDITIONS IN GERMANY GROW MORE CRITICAL

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 1.—An official telegraphic report on conditions in Germany received here today represents the situation to be more critical than any reports yet published. A paraphrase of the report follows:

"Germany's population wants peace, and the people declare it will be concluded in November, because a German victory by arms is felt to be impossible of realization. German workmen, stirred to a high pitch of discontent by the Socialists, boldly state

that they will leave the factories necessary for the conduct of the war if the war continues during the winter.

"Uprisings in several parts of the empire are taking place with ever-increasing frequency. In Berlin soldiers participated in the disorders, in one demonstration 25 German soldiers being counted.

"The Franco-English aerial bombardments of German cities and towns are increasing the dissatisfaction of the masses with the war. At Essen, bombs, dropped from airplanes, did

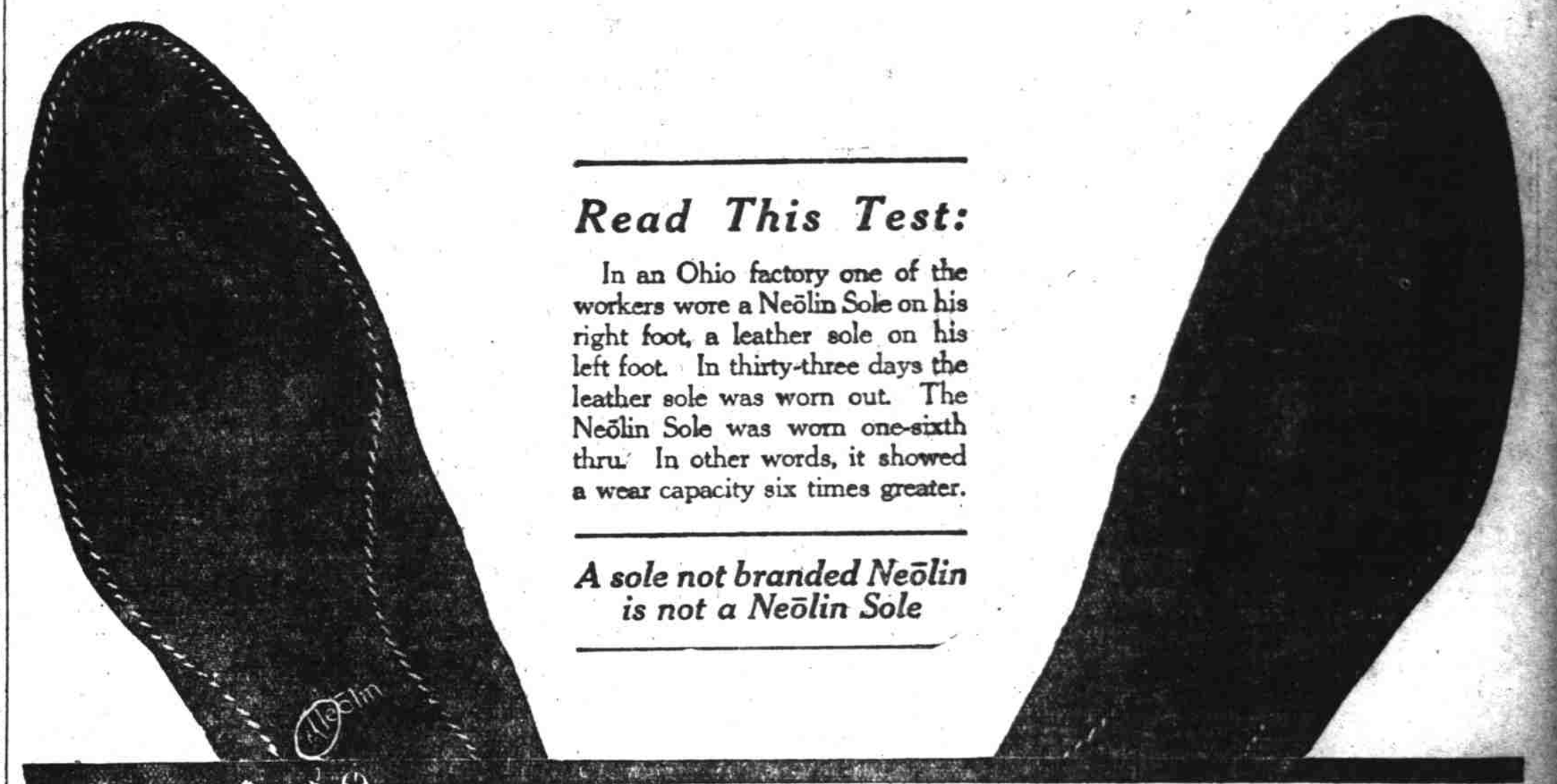
circus during a performance for soldiers, at which 800 soldiers were killed.

"German civil life presents a terrible picture. Children are obliged to go to bed at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and to rise not before 10 o'clock in the morning because of the knowledge that, being awake, they would feel enormous damage, some striking the need of eating, and there is an insufficient amount of food for them. Interned enemy aliens in Germany are compelled to work in ammunition

factories, and they are treated with extreme hardships, especially being denied sufficient nourishment. They obtained food by the use of tickets, which entitle such enemy aliens, forced to do German war work, to 250 grams of meat weekly, as much bread of a very bad and unpalatable quality, two and one-half kilograms of potatoes, 250 grams of peas, and fifty grams of some undefinable grease. A suit of clothes costs them 250 marks. Interesting statements about Germany's unsettled political situation

and treachery in the ranks of the army made by an East Prussian prisoner have been received here in official despatches. According to this soldier, the Socialist and revolutionary spirit is growing so rapidly that it is expected to endanger the supremacy of the Junkers by spring, and the military authorities are adopting most severe repressive measures. He also told a story of how German privates left their officers to their fate in the face of fire, and of how officers hated by their troops fell on battlefields with bullets in their backs.

*Copy No. 3764—8 1/2 x 19 in.—Newspapers



Read This Test:

In an Ohio factory one of the workers wore a Neolin Sole on his right foot, a leather sole on his left foot. In thirty-three days the leather sole was worn out. The Neolin Sole was worn one-sixth thru. In other words, it showed a wear capacity six times greater.

A sole not branded Neolin is not a Neolin Sole

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ON all styles of men's, women's and children's shoes, Neolin Soles save. For Neolin Soles wear better than ordinary soles and make the uppers last longer.

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And when you first put on a pair of shoes Neolin-soled you will be pleasantly

surprised to find that they need no breaking in. They are more flexible and comfortable than ordinary soles.

When you do your fall and winter buying for yourself and for your family be sure to ask for shoes with Neolin Soles. You can get them in black, white or tan—and they always bear the brand Neolin.

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Leather soles soak up water—Neolin Soles are waterproof.

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(Tear Out and Preserve These Lists)

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Kim Chow, 1018 Nuuanu Street.
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Regal Shoe Store, corner Hotel and Fort Streets.
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